

MOVING UP OR MOVING OUT:
NEW JOB DEMANDS, ABILITY TO COPE AND BURNOUT AMONG TELEVISION
NEWS PRODUCERS AND EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS

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ABSTRACT

This study is a qualitative analysis of the effects of job stressors on producers and executive producers in local television newsrooms. The industry is currently in a state of flux, with a flagging economy and changing technology. Shifting industry demands and new business practices are redefining the work of producing – expanding the demands and, in some cases, diminishing resources. Interviews with television producers and executive producers in five television markets reveal emotional struggles against exhaustion, cynicism and burnout. This study compares the journalists' responses with the components of Maslach's Burnout Inventory as well as with Karasek's Job Demand Control model. The researcher sought to understand how issues of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, reduced personal accomplishment, job demand and control over work affected perceptions of job satisfaction among study participants. Additionally, this study examines the role longevity, or veteran journalist status, may play in the coping skills of producers and executive producers.